



Department of Energy
Washington, DC 20585

MAR 19 1994

Davor Pevec, Esquire
Counsel to the Enewetak/Ujelang
Local Government Council
1001 Bishop Street
Suite 2424, Pauahi Tower
Honolulu, Hawaii 96813

Dear Mr. Pevec:

This is in response to your March 1, 1994, letter requesting response to several concerns regarding the Department of Energy's (DOE) monitoring programs associated with the people and environment of Enewetak Atoll. Information regarding Defense Nuclear Agency (DNA), Department of Defense, plans for the short and long-term monitoring of the Runit dome was also requested. You questioned the scope of DOE's recent sampling mission to Runit, which DOE agreed to conduct based on concerns you expressed during the December 1993 DOE Marshall Islands Program Review Meeting.

Adequacy of Radiation Dose Monitoring

As discussed during the December 1993 DOE Marshall Islands Program Review Meeting, DOE will attempt to whole-body count the population residing on Enewetak on a biennial basis. To accomplish this, DOE plans on whole-body counting one-half of the population each year. In preparation for this summer's mission, DOE wrote Mayor Naptali Peter of the Enewetak/Ujelang Atoll Local Government Council and provided a copy of the list of Enewetak residents who were whole-body counted during the February 1993 Bioassay Mission. DOE requested assistance in identifying and providing DOE a list of Enewetak residents. DOE will compare the list of Enewetak residents with our list of those who were whole-body counted during the February 1993 Bioassay Mission to determine those to be whole-body counted during this summer's bioassay mission. You were provided a copy of this letter.

DOE intends to monitor those individuals who reside on Enewetak. The purpose of whole-body counting is to determine the amount of radioactive material, predominantly cesium-137, present in an individual's body. This radioactive material is biologically eliminated from the body over time. The amount of radioactive material present in individuals who reside exclusively or predominantly on an atoll such as Majuro would be minute, if even present. In our letter to Mayor Peter, DOE recommended that the Enewetak/Ujelang Atoll Local Government Council only list those residents who actually reside on Enewetak for 90 or more days each year. You expressed concern regarding DOE providing whole-body counting to Enewetak residents who are visiting other atolls. DOE will whole-body count Enewetak residents visiting other atolls concurrent with DOE being at that atoll conducting whole-body counts.

It is DOE's understanding that the population of Enewetak consists of approximately 800 individuals. Additionally, the 1992 Marshall Islands Statistical Abstract Report lists the population of Enewetak Atoll as 715 individuals. This population size would correspond with 400 whole-body counts per year and not the 600 whole-body counts per year referenced in your letter. Please inform DOE if our estimate is inaccurate.

Increased Health Problems

In response to your request for all the results of whole-body counting and urine analysis of the Enewetak population, representatives at Brookhaven National Laboratory (BNL) are compiling the data. DOE will provide you with the information as soon as it is available. This information should be available by the end of May 1994. In addition, BNL Medical Department staff and BNL Bioassay Department staff reviewed their files to determine whether they have any records of the 10 individuals named in your letter. There were no records identified by the BNL Medical Department staff. The BNL Bioassay Department staff identified whole-body count records for the following individuals:

Mrs. Ruthan Jackson
Mrs. Tokko Henry
Mr. Sam Luke
Mr. Lombwe Mark
Mr. Benji John
Mr. Jisen Gideon
Mrs. Erine Jitiam

As agreed, we will provide you a copy of these records after you have obtained the necessary releases from the individuals.

Adequacy of Enewetak Environmental Monitoring, Including the Runit Containment Site

The results of the environmental sampling completed on Enewetak Atoll, including the sampling and grid work completed last fall, are not yet finalized. DOE will provide you with these results as soon as they are available. As requested, the data will be presented in a meaningful and understandable manner.

Based on discussions held during the December 1993 DOE Marshall Islands Program Review Meeting, DOE conducted a specific mission to Runit Island for the purpose of collecting environmental samples. DOE agreed to conduct this

special mission based on concerns you expressed regarding the frequency in which DNA collects such samples. DOE collected the following types of samples:

- o Water from wells surrounding the dome;
- o Lagoon water;
- o Fish (no shellfish were caught); and
- o Vegetation.

DOE will collect some lagoon floor sediments and attempt to collect shellfish when the Runit berm area is gridded and surveyed. You also requested a plan to be devised for the near and long-term monitoring of the Runit dome. As was previously discussed, the monitoring of the dome is the responsibility of DNA. Your concerns regarding the near and long-term monitoring of the Runit dome can only be addressed by that office. A copy of your letter and this response is being provided to DNA, however, you may wish to articulate your concerns directly to that office. Their address is:

Director
Defense Nuclear Agency
6801 Telegraph Road
Alexandria, Virginia 22314

In your letter you expressed concern as to the adequacy of the environmental monitoring of Runit Island and requested that the berm area surrounding the dome be surveyed on a 10 meter grid. To alleviate your concern, DOE will survey the area from the dome edge out past the berm as requested. DOE will also provide you with the sampling plan and sample location overlay map as requested.

In your letter, you stated that DOE was proposing to conduct a 100 meter grid survey for the remainder of Runit Island. Due to the lack of residents and the food gathering restrictions on Runit Island, DOE has not proposed gridding the remainder of Runit Island as discussed in your letter.

Transportation of Fuel to Enewetak

As was previously discussed, as part of the transfer of management of the Enewetak Field Station, the Republic of the Marshall Islands (RMI) agreed to resume responsibility for the fueling of the field station. This agreement was consistent with the U.S. Congress intent for RMI to assume total management of the station. In addition, DOE is prohibited from distributing fuel that DOE has purchased at Kwajalein Atoll to a non-DOE entity. This

would constitute an unfair competition with private industry when fuel is available commercially.

If you have any questions regarding this response, you may contact Mr. R. Thomas Bell on (301) 903-3889. Thank you for your cooperation.

Sincerely,

for *R.T. Bell*
Harry J. Pettengill
Deputy Assistant Secretary
for Health

cc w/incoming:

Ambassador David Fields,

American Embassy, Majuro

Colonel John Cole, Department
of State, Washington

Tom Kijiner, Majuro

Senator Ismael John, Majuro

Mayor Naptali Peter, Majuro

Jean Howard, BNL

Ed Kaplan, BNL

William Robison, Lawrence Livermore

National Laboratory

Director, DNA, Virginia